



Beth Shalom Weekly Update

Thursday, October 24, 2024 to Wednesday, October 30, 2024
Hazzan Lance H. Tapper, Hon DMus Torah Portion Bereishit

Shabbat Service - October 25, 2024 - 7:30 p.m.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Evening 7:30 pm

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

Erica will work from home Tuesday - Friday, 10:00a-4:00p. The Beth Shalom office will now be open by appointment only. Our office phone and email will continue to be attended to during office hours.

10:00a-4:00p Tuesday-Friday
562.941.8744
bswoffice@verizon.net

Yahrzeit

Michelle Hess
In memory of cousin
Malcolm Schwartz

If you know of someone who is ill, had surgery, or just needs a call now and then, please let us know so we can reach out. Thank you.

Kristallnacht Remembrance Service

See flyer on page 3.

Fiddler on the Roof

See flyer on page 4.

NOTE: We have filled the reservations for all of our tickets to Fiddler on November 16. However we will take names for a waiting list in case of cancellations.

Service Attendance

If you are not a member, coming with a member or known to someone who will be at the service, please call the office before coming to any of our services.

We do have security guards at all of our services and events.

Clergy Schedule

Virtual Services: www.facebook.com/bethshalomofwhittier

**Services and events are once again open to in person. Services will continue to broadcast on Facebook simultaneously for those who cannot attend in person.*

October 25--Shabbat Bereshit--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken

November 1--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken

November 8--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Kristallnacht

Remembrance Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

November 15--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

November 22--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

November 24--3:00 pm--WACA Thanksgiving Celebration at First

Friends--Hazzan Lance and Aryell Cohen

November 29--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken

Beth Shalom Services: We are open for in person services. If you are not yet comfortable coming to services in person, please tune in virtually by visiting our Facebook page, **Beth Shalom of Whittier**. When there is a livestream taking place, you can click on it and watch.

Book Club: TBD - Please check back.

Simcha Sharing Let the office know of your good news and we will share it in the next weekly. Weddings ★ Births

Tribute Cards To send a Tribute Card, please contact Michelle Hess. Her e-mail is: michelleh3532@gmail.com

PayPal Donations: Paypal donations welcome: bswoffice@verizon.net

The Profound Knowledge of a Rebbe, a Greek Philosopher, and a Baby

Torah Reading: Genesis 1:1-6:8
Haftarah Reading: Isaiah 42:5-43:10
Torah Portion: Bereshit

By Samuel Seid, posted on October 3, 2018

My wife, Heather, and I are the happy parents of a 16-month-old baby, Winnie. Each day, it seems that baby Winnie introduces a new insight to amaze us. From the big milestones, such as her first steps, to those little, sweet moments of hugs and cuddles, we feel consistently blessed by our child. Her shining personality continuously unfolds as it did just this past week when she uttered her first sentence. Winnie pointed to an object on the ground, looks up at Heather and me, and asked, "What is this?" Heather and I were floored. We were not even sure at first listen that they were intentional words—considering the possibility her babbling noises merely sounded

Birthday/Anniversary

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like real words—until she repeated her sentence two more times. There it was. Our baby's first sentence was a question. One that looked to understand her world. This question, while of a seemingly simple nature, attempted to probe the surroundings with an investigatory eye. It was a question that suggested a deep desire to learn and a profound thirst for knowledge.

It just so happens, as we learn in this week's Torah portion, Winnie is certainly not the first person who deeply desired knowledge. In Bereshit, we read of God's instructions to the first human that all trees of the garden of Eden are permissible to eat, "but as for the tree of knowledge (da'at) of good and bad, you must not eat of it for the day you eat of it, you shall surely die" (Genesis 2:4). Of course, this is where it all takes a turn, and we have the first instance of paradise lost. The humans eat the fruit thus gaining this mysteriously profound knowledge, this da'at, and they do so at the ultimate cost. They trade possible immortality for knowledge. Da'at is no ordinary, cursory piece of trivia. Rather this is a deeper knowing, a sort of spiritual sensitivity and astute recognition of the universe around us.

To explore further, we turn to the commentary of the Kotzger Rebbe, the early-middle 19th century Hasidic Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, Poland. He explains the depth of this decision by the first human to eat from the tree, to seek this da'at: "Adam said to himself, 'It would be better that deaths were imposed upon me and my offspring throughout all generations, but I will not be without knowledge (da'at) for even a brief moment of time.'" Adam becomes the prototype for the long cited Socratic axiom, "The unexamined life is not worth living." The first human was afforded the choice and opted for a life of finitude and knowledge over one of eternity and utter naivete. Ever since, humans have had this deep desire to learn, to grow, to search for this knowledge, this da'at, despite any and all instincts to ignore the pain that we might encounter when we let go of our blissful ignorance.

Here we find ourselves, back at the beginning of the Torah. We have turned it over once again and can reexamine it. We can again ask of our shared holy text, "What is this?" as we dissect its stories and probe its teaching. We just experienced a month of potentially transformative holidays from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, from Sukkot to Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. At this time of year, we are afforded the blessing to review our own lives with fresh eyes, to ask, "What is this?" as we do an accounting of our own souls and examine if we are living the lives we are meant to live. We are invited to take a deeper look at our surroundings at our community, our society, and beyond, and ask, "What is this?" What greater truth, what deeper knowledge, what da'at, must we seek to find?

We no longer have the option to avoid the challenging questions. The fruit has been eaten, and we are blessed with open eyes to explore. It is up to us to determine what questions we must ask and what knowledge we must uncover. It is my blessing for us all to learn it from the commentary of the Kutzger Rebbe, to learn it from the philosophy of Socrates, to learn it from the question of a baby, and to feel emboldened to ask, truly and honestly and with neither shame nor hesitation, "What is this?"

See flyers on pages 3 & 4.



(Pestalozzistrasse Synagogue—Berlin, Germany)

Beth Shalom of Whittier

presents

A Special Shabbat Evening Service

in conjunction and cooperation with the

PESTALOZZISTRASSE SYNAGOGUE OF BERLIN, GERMANY

featuring the liturgy and music of the Berlin Jewish Community

in remembrance of Kristallnacht

Friday, November 8, 2024

Prelude: 7:25 pm; 7:30 pm Service

JOIN US IN PERSON IN OUR SANCTUARY AT:

FIRST FRIENDS—13205 PHILADELPHIA ST, WHITTIER, CA 90601

(Those who are not members must register ahead with our synagogue office at 562-941-8744 and will be subject to a security check when they arrive)

**OR WATCH THE LIVE BROADCAST ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE:
Beth Shalom of Whittier**

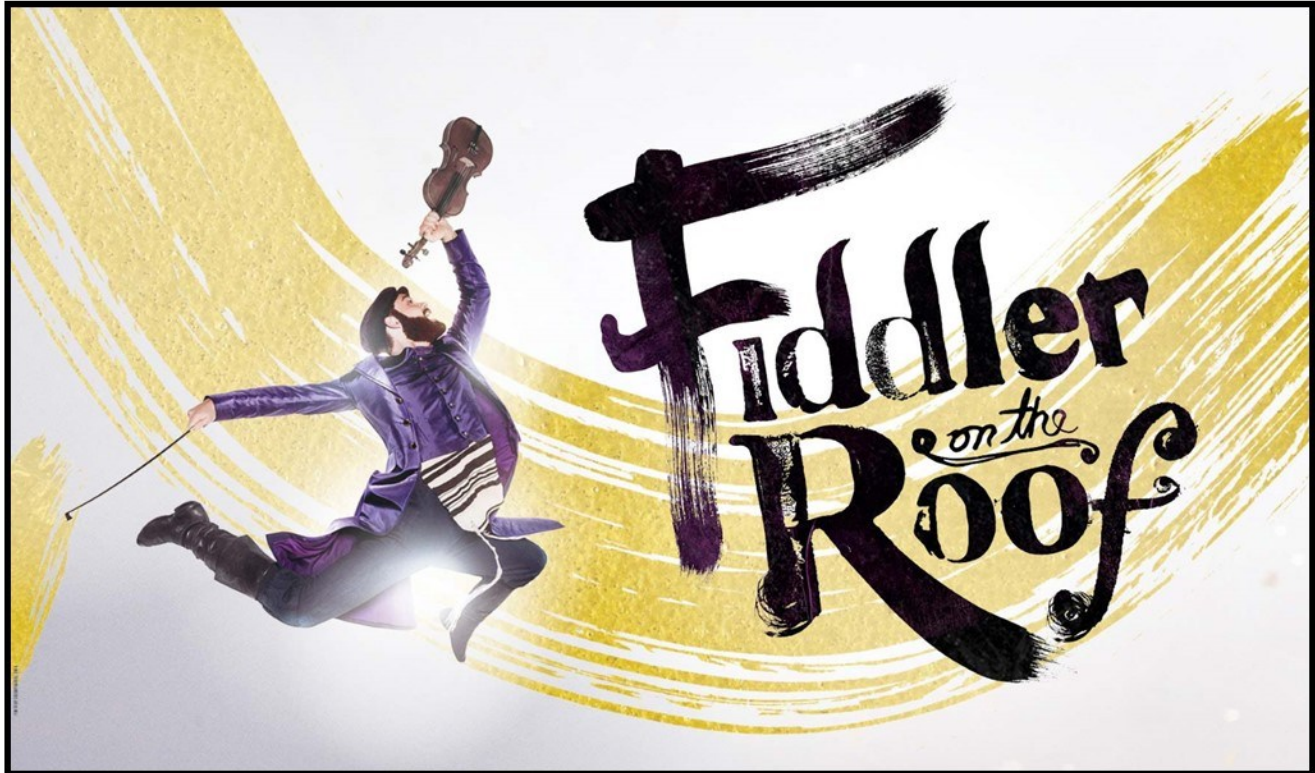
A Special Oneg will be served following the service in our foyer

Officiants:

*Hazzan Lance H. Tapper, Hon DMus, SPIRITUAL LEADER
Ty Woodward, ORGANIST*



BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER PRESENTS



**Join your Beth Shalom friends and family for
an afternoon at the theatre!**

Saturday, November 16, 2024 ★ 2:00 p.m.

La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts
14900 La Mirada Boulevard, La Mirada 90638

There are a limited number of tickets, reserve yours today by
calling or emailing the Temple office.

Tickets are free for MEMBERS ONLY plus one guest.

We do not have any extra tickets for sale.

Tickets can be picked up at the office during regular office hours.

Let the office know if you need transportation.

bswoffice@verizon.net ★ (562) 941-8744